

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANILA 05560 291022Z

43

ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2778O

CONFIDENTIAL MANILA 5560

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, RP
SUBJECT: AQUINO CASE DEVELOPMENTS: PERPETUATION HEARINGS TO RESUME
APRIL 30

REF: MANILA 5399

1. THE MILITARY COMMISSIONS'S PERPETUATION PROCEEDINGS ON AQUINO WILL RESUME 9 AM APRIL 29. ACTING PRESIDENT OF MILITARY COMMISSION \$2 ORDERED RESUMPTION OF HEARINGS FOLLOWING MOTION BY MILITARY PROSECUTOR WHO ARGUED SUPREME COURT RESOLUTION OF APRIL 25 (REFTEL) LIFTED COURT'S APRIL 8 RESTRAINING ORDER ON PERPETUATION HEARINGS.

2. FORT BONIFACIO AUTHORITIES ISSUED MEDICAL BULLETIN ON 24TH DAY OF AQUINO'S HUNGER STRIKE. HIS PULSE RATE, BLOOD PRESSURE, RESPIRATORY AND HEART CONDITIONS WERE REPORTEDLY NORMAL. BULLETIN SAID "HE APPEARED IN GOOD PHYSICAL SHAPE AND IN HIGH SPIRITS AND RECEIVED HIS USUAL VISITORS, INCLUDING IMMEDIATE MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY AND LAWYERS. DURING WEEKEND, HIS WIFE WAS ALLOWED TO STAY OVERNIGHT. A TEAM OF DOCTORS IS ATTENDING HIM". MEDICAL BULLETIN ISSUED AS CHEIF MILITARY PROSECUTOR, COL. SISON COMMENTED: "THE NEWS AFLOAT THAT MR. AQUINO IS ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE OR EVEN THAT HE HAS EXPIRED IS FALSE." BULLETIN TODAY REPORTS AQUINO FAMILY CLAIM THAT HE HAS LOST 33 POUNDS AND NOW WEIGHS ONLY 127 POUNDS.

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PAGE 02 MANILA 05560 291022Z

3. AQUINO HAS REPORTEDLY INFORMED COURT HE WILL ATTEND

HEARING IN PERSON DESPITE SUPREME COURT RULING HIS PRE-
SENCE COULD BE COMPELLED BY PROSECUTION ONLY TO IDENTIFY
STATE WITNESSES. FIRST WITNESS TOMORROW (APRIL 29) EX-
PECTED TO BE "COMMANDER MELODY" (BENJAMIN BIE) WHO WAS
ON STAND WHEN HEARINGS SUSPENDED.

4. COMMENT: AQUINO'S PURPORTED DECISION TO APPEAR AT
HEARING CARRIES ISSUE TO GOP AND IS IN KEEPING WITH OUR
UNDERSTANDING THAT AQUINO, IF NOT HIS FOLLOWERS, APPEARS
SUPREMELY CONFIDENT HE IS DOING THE RIGHT THING. RECENT
VISITORS HAVE COME AWAY IMPRESSED WITH SOBER, ALMOST RELI-
GIOUS CONVICTION OF AQUINO IN RIGHTEOUSNESS OF HIS CON-
TEST WITH MARCOS. OUTCOME, AS AQUINO PHRASES IT, IS
"IN GOD'S HANDS". AQUINO ATTITUDE IS NOT CONDUCIVE TO
NEGOTIATIONS ALTHOUGH HIS FRIENDS MAY SEEK TO ACT
FOR HIM.
SULLIVAN

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